

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00

OPR-02 A-01 SY-05 OC-06 CCO-00 AID-05 PC-01 /117 W

-----231328Z 050986 /41

R 221620Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7163

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

&61::AMEMBASSY JIBJA 051

AMEMBASSY MWSRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USMISSION USUN NY

CINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L NOUAKCHOTT 0589

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, PFOR, SS, MR, MI

SUBJECT: EX-SAHARA: POLISARIO STRIKE NEAR DAKHLA

REF: 76 NOUAKCHOTT 3103

1. LOCAL SPANISH DIPLOMAT REPORTS THAT GIRM AND POLISARIO FORCES CLASHED SHARPLY ON MARCH 15 IN AREA JUST NORTH OF AARGUB (2337N 1552W), THE COASTAL CITY IN WESTERN SAHARA WHICH FACES DAKHLA ACROSS RIO DE ORO BAY. AFTER ADVANCING POLISARIO ATTACK FORCE HAD BEEN SPOTTED BY GIRM AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE, GIRM GROUND FORCES WERE DISPATCHED FROM DAKHLA TO INTERCEPT APPROACHING GUERRILLAS. DAY-LONG SEARCH PROVED UNEVENTFUL
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UNTIL LATE AFTERNOON WHEN POLISARIO SPRUNG AMBUSH WHICH BADLY MAULED GIRM COLUMN AND FORCED MAURITANIANS TO RETREAT AND REGROUP. GIRM COLUMN EVENTUALLY MADE ITS WAY BACK TO DAKHLA WHERE F-27 AIRCRAFT WAS WAITING TO EVACUATE WOUNDED TROOPS TO NOUAKCHOTT. EIGHTEEN OF THE MOST SEVERELY WOUNDED GIRM SOLDIERS WERE FLOWN TO NOUAKCGTT DURING NIGHT OF MARCH 15 AND WERE IMMEDIATELY HOSPITALIZED. AT

LEAST TWO MAURITANIANS WERE KILLED AS RESULT ZFIGHT-
ING INCLUDING DAKHLA SECTOR COMMANDER. POLISARIO LOSSES
ARE NOT KNOWN BUT ARE PRESUMED TO BE LIGHT.

2. COMMENT: THIS IS THE XVIXT MILITARY ACTIVITY IN
THE DAKHLA AREA OF WHICH WE ARE AWARE SINCE DECEMBD

7, 1976, WHEN POLISARIO SIMILARLY INFLICETED HEAVY
LOSSES ON MAURITANIANS (SEE REFTEL). IT IS INTERESTING
TO NOTE THAT IN BOTH OF THESE CLASHES NEAR AARGUB POLI-
SARIO HAS SUCCESSFULLY UTILIZED AN AMBUSH CLOSE TO
NIGHTFALL TO NEUTRALIZE GIRM REACTION CAPABILITY AND
AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE.

HANDYSIDE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INVASIONS, COMBAT OPERATIONS, BORDER INCIDENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 22-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977NOUAKC00589
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770099-0645
Format: TEL
From: NOUAKCHOTT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770335/aaaabeda.tel
Line Count: 76
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 43e834b4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 NOUAKCHOTT 3103
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3035493
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EX-SAHARA: POLISARIO STRIKE NEAR DAKHLA
TAGS: MOPS, PFOR, SS, MR, MI
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/43e834b4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009